



DIRECTOR

UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY
WASHINGTON

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December 13, 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. McGeorge Bundy
Special Assistant
to the President

attached
As requested for you by Mr. Gordon Chase in conversation with Mr. Reed Harris, I provide amplification of the point made in the weekly report to the President, December 11, as item "3b" regarding "A base in Cuba and a base in Turkey are the same thing."

Comparison of Soviet and U. S. Foreign Bases in the World Press

European newspapers began drawing parallels between Soviet bases in Cuba and our own overseas installations as early as October 23. The Guardian, before it about-faced, said in its first critical editorial that "what is sauce for Cuba, is also sauce for Turkey, Berlin and other places."

The possibility of an exchange of base withdrawals emerged with increasing frequency during the week, in spite of all efforts to explain that they were not comparable. As late as October 26 the Times, London, while admitting the difference, added "Even so a case can be made for banishing offensive missiles from each base" (Cuba and Turkey).

By the end of the week, Khrushchev's Cuba-Turkey base swap idea had won a good measure of approval in Europe, Japan, neutral countries of the Far East, the Arab countries, Greece, and a number of African countries. Apparently no major paper in Latin America endorsed the proposal.

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The idea won its quick popularity in part because it offered a superficially plausible basis for negotiated settlement at a time when fear of general war was intense.

The notion was most widely accepted by the leftist press, the neutralist or non-aligned, and the nationalistic, highly sensitive "new" nations which, generally, oppose all "foreign" bases.

The line persists. Some leftist European papers have suggested that the U. S. now remove some of its missile bases on foreign soil as a reciprocal measure. There is considerable African opinion for giving up Guantanamo and other U. S. bases, and further pressures have developed in Morocco, Libya, and Zanzibar opposing U. S. installations there.

Soviet propaganda to Japan has now begun to compare the Cuban experience to the presence of U. S. bases in Japan, although as yet there is no concerted campaign.

The conclusions of the USIA's Far East analyst summarize the problem:

"The tenor of Japanese and neutral reaction to Khrushchev's Turkey-for-Cuba deal, although quickly muffled by Khrushchev's retreat, indicated a definite Western vulnerability ... Had he stuck to his offer for another 48 hours, this would have become even more apparent. As it was, the left-wing in the Far East was deprived of perhaps its only real propaganda opportunity to Khrushchev's sudden reversal of policy. But the Western vulnerability remains for future Communist exploitation."


Edward R. Murrow